

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 IO-11 AF-06 SSO-00

NSCE-00 /043 R

DRAFTED BY: NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY: NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS-MR FUNSETH (INFO)

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NEA/ARP-MR AHERNE

AF/P-MR POPE

NEA:MS GRIFFIN

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O 232237Z JAN 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
USCINCEUR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
JANUARY 23, 1976:

Q. ONE OF OUR EMINENT COLLEAGUES HAS A STORY THIS MORNING
IN AN AFTERNOON NEWSPAPER THAT SAYS THE STATE DEPARTMENT
WAS TAKEN BY SURPRISE BY PUBLICATION OF THE BUDGET
FIGURES ABOUT ISRAEL'S FOREIGN AID. IS THAT TRUE? I
DON'T MEAN THE STORY; I MEAN WERE YOU TAKEN BY SURPRISE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHY THAT PARTICULAR FIGURE WAS
PUBLISHED THE OTHER DAY. YOU SHOULDN'T READ ANY SPECIAL
SIGNIFICANCE INTO ITS PUBLICATION.

LET ME MAKE A FEW GENERAL POINTS ON THAT. THE GENERAL
FIGURE THAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT, THAT IS, IN THE STORY
THAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT, IS IN THE BUDGET, AND IT IS
CORRECT, BUT IT IS ONLY PART OF THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE
PACKAGE WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE PROPOSING FOR
ISRAEL TO CONGRESS.

Q. IS THAT DOLS 1.5 BILLION?

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A. I THINK THE STORY SAID DOLS 1 BILLION, YES. IN MID-
FEBRUARY WE WILL BE PRESENTING A DETAILED ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM TO THE CONGRESS FOR OTHER COUNTRIES AS WELL AS FOR
ISRAEL, AND, OF COURSE, I DO NOT HAVE ANY DETAILS FOR
YOU ON THAT NOW.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY BREAKDOWN OF THE AID PROGRAM?

A. FOR ISRAEL? FOR FISCAL 76?

Q. RIGHT.

Q. I BELIEVE THE OVERALL FIGURE WAS SOMETHING LIKE
DOLS 2.2 BILLION.

Q. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE SIGNIFICANCE IS OF THE DOLS 250
MILLION REQUEST FOR GRANT AID, WHICH IS IN A DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT MILITARY AID BUDGET?

A. FOR WHICH -- WHAT FISCAL YEAR ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

Q. FOR FISCAL 76 I THINK.

A. I DON'T.

Q. IT IS ONE OF THE SUPPLEMENTALS THEY ARE ASKING FOR.

A. I DON'T. MAYBE YOU OUGHT TO ASK THEM. (DOD)

Q. OKAY.

A. NOW, AS I SAID, I CANNOT GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THE
OVERALL PACKAGE THAT WILL BE PRESENTED FOR ISRAEL, BUT I
CAN SAY THAT IT IS QUITE SUBSTANTIAL AND WAS ARRIVED AT
AFTER VERY CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THE SECURITY NEEDS OF
ISRAEL, IN LIGHT OF OUR OWN ECONOMIC SITUATION. AND WE
WELL RECOGNIZE THAT ISRAEL ALSO HAS SERIOUS ECONOMIC
PROBLEMS.

WE BELIEVE THAT OUR OVERALL AID PACKAGE WILL BE ADEQUATE
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TO INSURE ISRAEL'S ABILITY TO MEET ITS SECURITY REQUIRE-
MENTS IN THE FUTURE.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW COMMENT ON THE BEIRUT CRISIS?

A. NOT REALLY ANY NEW INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT IS
HAPPENING THERE. IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE ASKING ME?

Q. OR A NEW POSITION, U.S. POSITION.

A. NONE BEYOND WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY. WE ARE
ENCOURAGED WITH CURRENT EFFORTS TO ARRANGE A CEASE-FIRE,
AND HOPE THAT A DIALOGUE LEADING TO A POLITICAL ACCOMMO-
DATION WILL ADVANCE.

WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE AREA TO ENCOURAGE POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION AMONG THE VARIOUS LEBANESE PARTIES AND TO DISCOURAGE FURTHER MILITARY ESCALATION.

NOW THAT A CEASE-FIRE HAS BEEN PROCLAIMED AND NEGOTIATIONS ARE PROCEEDING, WE THINK OTHERS SHOULD AWAIT THE RESULTS OF THOSE EFFORTS. THAT, OF COURSE, INCLUDES OURSELVES.

I MIGHT ADD THAT WE SHARE THE CONCERN OF THE CONGRESS. I BELIEVE THE SENATE, IN A RESOLUTION, HAS CALLED FOR THE PRESIDENT TO USE HIS GOOD OFFICES TO END THE FIGHTING. WE SHARE THE CONCERN OF THE CONGRESS THAT THE FIGHTING SHOULD END AND THAT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IS ACHIEVED THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO ALL THE COMMUNITIES OF LEBANON AND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF LEBANON AND PRESERVES THE SECURITY OF ALL LEBANESE AND CONTRIBUTES TO STABILITY IN THAT AREA.

Q. I DON'T THINK I UNDERSTAND WHOLLY WHAT YOU MEANT BACK ON THAT LINE ITEM ON THE AID TO ISRAEL WHEN YOU SAID THE GENERAL FIGURE IS CORRECT BUT THAT IT REPRESENTS ONLY PART OF THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE PACKAGE. ARE YOU SAYING THAT THERE ARE ADDITIONAL FUNDS THAT WILL SHOW UP WHEN THE DETAILS ARE PUBLISHED?
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A. I AM SAYING THAT WHAT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IS A MILITARY AID FIGURE, THAT THE ECONOMIC SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE FIGURE IS TO BE PUBLISHED OR DETAILED TO THE CONGRESS IN FEBRUARY.

Q. HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOUND OUT HOW THAT ITEM ON ISRAEL'S EXACT MILITARY ASSISTANCE ALLOCATION GOT INTO THE BUDGET?

A. NO, I SAID I DON'T KNOW WHY IT WAS PUBLISHED. I AM NOT AWARE WE ARE INVESTIGATING THE REASON.

Q. I DON'T THINK ANYBODY THINKS THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS SURPRISED BY THE FIGURE, KNOWING FULL WELL THE FIGURE. THE QUESTION WAS WHETHER YOU WERE SURPRISED AT ITS PUBLICATION.

A. I WOULDN'T MAKE A BIG THING OUT OF IT, NO. I SAID THE FIGURE IS CORRECT AS PART OF A TOTAL. I DO NOT THINK THAT WHETHER WE ARE SURPRISED OR NOT REALLY HAS TOO MUCH SIGNIFICANCE.

Q. IT DOES IF YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ISRAEL YET.

A. WE HAVE BEEN IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ISRAELIS ALL ALONG. SORRY. IT HAD BEEN OUR INTENTION TO CONSULT WITH THEM ON THIS BEFORE THE RABIN VISIT. THE TIMING I THINK IS REALLY NOT IMPORTANT.

Q. IS THAT THE ROUTINE WAY THAT THE RECIPIENT COUNTRY IS INFORMED? ARE THEY INFORMED PRIOR TO THE DETAILS GOING TO THE CONGRESS OR SIMULTANEOUSLY?

A. I DO NOT THINK I CAN CHARACTERIZE IT IN ANY GENERAL WAY. I THINK IN SOME CASES THERE ARE CONSULTATIONS AND IN SOME CASES THERE ARE NOT.

Q. IT WOULD DEPEND IN THIS CASE ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RABIN VISIT COMING PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 14, IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?

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A. I AM NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING.

Q. WELL, I MEAN IF IT IS NOT ROUTINE TO CONSULT WITH THE COUNTRY ON THE FINAL FIGURE PRIOR TO THE DETAILS, THE LINE ITEMS, GOING TO THE HILL, THE I ASSUMED THAT YOU WERE SUGGESTING THAT YOU WOULD HAVE CONSULTED WITH THE ISRAELIS PRIOR TO THAT EVENT WAS BECAUSE OF RABIN'S VISIT.

A. I DO NOT KNOW THAT THAT IS SO. I KNOW WE WOULD HAVE INFORMED THE ISRAELIS OF THIS BEFORE HE CAME, AND OBVIOUSLY IT WILL BE A SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION WITH HIM WHILE HE IS HERE. BUT, AS I SAY, I DO NOT KNOW THAT THERE IS A RULE THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO WHEN CONSULTATIONS ARE OR ARE NOT MADE, OR IF THEY ARE MADE, PRIOR TO PUBLICATION. SISCO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE017812
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760027-0585
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760126/aaaaawnq.tel
Line Count: 265
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hattaycs
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2004 by schwenja>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by hattaycs>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, US
To: AMMAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006